

The police shot and killed Mark Duggan in 2011. A new IPCC report let the cops off the hook. But the facts don't fit, as Annette Mackin discovers
>>Pages 10&11

A DEATH RETOLD



The anti poll tax riot in 1990 that helped oust Thatcher showed it was possible to fight back, writes Sadie Robinson
>>Pages 14&15



Thatcher's downfall

Socialist Worker

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TORIES THREATEN £12 BILLION NEW ASSAULT ON WELFARE

STUFF THEIR CUTS

BENEFITS CAMPAIGNER AND TUSC CANDIDATE SLAMS PROPOSALS

by LIZ KITCHING, TUSC candidate for Leeds Central

IF THE Tories get back in, we're in deep trouble. For me, this is the third year of living in fear of the bedroom tax.

Every day is a day of survival. Benefit claimants have been suffering under the Tories' humiliating attacks.

Welfare has been slashed to the absolute bone—and now Iain Duncan Smith has said he would cut £12 billion more.

In our Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) campaign we've met people who are angry at the Tories, but are also disappointed with Ed Miliband and the Labour Party.

That's why we've got to have strong fighting campaigns both in the streets and the workplaces.

We have to challenge the idea that we need to pay off their deficit—there's no more money down here. And we need to take on racist attempts to divide us.

The Bullingdon Boys have got away with it for too long—it's time now to take it back from the rich.



Liz Kitching

WAR

West backs Saudi Arabia's attacks on Yemen

SAUDI ARABIA is leading an alliance of ten countries in a military assault on Yemen.

It has carried out days of bombing raids on cities across the poorest country in the region, including a refugee camp.

The US and Britain support the attacks as Saudi Arabia is a close ally.

>>Page 8

UNISON



Historic vote overturns union leadership

HUNDREDS OF Unison union delegates voted to restart their local government pay campaign on Tuesday of last week.

They overturned the position of the union's leadership.

Activists now need to build on the mood to fight in their workplaces.

>>Page 6

STRIKE

Support grows for National Gallery workers' dispute

NATIONAL GALLERY strikers completed their latest five-day walkout last weekend.

They took part in speaking tours and raised over £1,000 for the strike fund.

They are now deciding the next steps in the campaign to put pressure on gallery bosses.

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THE THINGS THEY SAY

'The only way to make everyone rich is to support the rich to be richer.'

Rich Labour Party donor
Assem Allam

'We have a large Indian or Pakistani problem ... oh god, I nearly said problem'

Ukip candidate
Andrew Garcarz

'Secret ballots very important. Remember the Chartists'

David Cameron to fellow Tories when they attempted to remove the speaker of the House of Commons

'If this man is prime minister I will leave the UK. This man is not Great Britain. This is Russell Brand in a chuffing suit'

Holder of right wing opinions
Katie Hopkins

'Salmond: Let the SNP run the BBC'

The Daily Mail on the idea that a Scottish state could control the BBC

'Chilling demand'

The Daily Mail panics at the idea

Innocent—but you are not allowed to know what of

EROL INCEDAL did not plot to carry out terror attacks in Britain.

He did not plot to attack Tony Blair.

Those allegations were peripheral to his case. The core of what he was accused of and found not guilty of last week you are not allowed to know.

What was the evidence that prompted the jury to acquit him? We can't tell you.

What was the plot that he allegedly engaged in and that formed the prosecution's case? We can't tell you that either. We cannot even report the reason for secrecy, because it's a secret.

Incedal was arrested in October 2013 when police shot out the tyres of his Mercedes near the Tower of London.

There were no reporting

restrictions on the sensationalist reporting of the arrest. Two weeks before, a bug had been hidden in the car after he was stopped for speeding.

The original proposal from the Crown Prosecution Service was that the case be conducted in complete secrecy.

The Appeal Court lifted some restrictions to create a

trial in three parts. A small element of the case was conducted in open court.

A group of "accredited journalists" were allowed to make notes on "part two" of the trial. They could not take the notes out of the court nor publish reports.

A third part was held behind closed doors.

The episode was typical of

IN THE year to September 2014, there were 1,226,414 sanction decisions made for people on jobseeker's allowance. Some 108,000 people claiming Employment Support Allowance, a disability benefit, were referred for a sanction—up from 59,000 in the 12 months to September 2010, an increase of over 80 percent. Over one in five of those sanctioned on JSA, not a disability benefit, were disabled.

Iain Duncan Smith

EDWARD TIMPSON, Tory MP for Crewe and Nantwich, is heir to the Timsons key-cutting shoe repair empire.
"In this parliament I've campaigned hard for jobs and infrastructure in our area," he writes to constituents. "Local employment is now even lower than it was before the 2008 crash."

Vote Socialist in Norwich to get Tory

A TORY MP is so worried about losing her seat that she has resorted to suggesting that she is "a Socialist".

The Norwich North MP Chloe Smith quotes from a January letter to the Norwich Evening News—"she can seem to be more of a Socialist than Conservative".

But before resigning to concentrate on shoring up her majority, Comrade Smith was a Tory minister in the Treasury and Cabinet Office.

But not mentioning things seems

to be the strategy for this election. So far there hasn't been a picture of Nick Clegg on any Lib Dem election leaflets. Labour have been a little reluctant to put Miliband on theirs. Scottish Labour leader Jim Murphy appears to have gone one step further and simply not mentioned Labour on his election leaflet at all.

ONE OF the final nasty acts of the coalition saw support for young children of refugees slashed by £16.01 from £52.96 to just £36.95.



Comrade Smith

MPs expenses—we just keep giving

FORTY-SIX MPS have claimed expenses for living in London, despite owning a property in the capital.

A change in the rules after the expenses scandal means while MPs can no longer claim mortgage interest, they can for hotel stays or rent. Some 25 Tories, 14 Labour and four Lib Dems were involved.

Lib Dem Sir Nick Harvey, who lets his Lambeth house and has claimed £39,772 in rent, said, "The situation is not of

MPs' choosing."

THE Cameron children were given a day off from school to watch their father at work. Presumably with their head's permission. He has said that he will stand down in 2020 but Troublemaker thinks it will be 2018.

Cameron wants to send little Elwen to Eton, but doesn't think he can while he's in Downing Street. That makes September 2018 the terminus ante quem, as Etonians like to say.

Go to Labour for racist mugs

FOR JUST £5 you can enjoy a cuppa and at the same time reassure yourself Labour isn't soft on immigrants.

The red mug also says "I'm voting Labour", presumably to ensure no one confused it for Ukip merchandise.

Oddly while Labour are a bit Ukip, Ukip mugs say "your voice" which is uninspiring. And the Tories didn't have any mugs for sale but did have a fridge magnet proposing "People power".

Troublemaker didn't look to see what the Lib Dems had on their mugs because we doubt you care.



ALL RISE

6%

rise in homeless families up to 13,650

54%

pay rise for Centrica boss Sam Laidlaw

Bye bye Burley—don't hurry back

TROUBLEMAKER regular Tory Aidan Burley has finally left parliament. He used his farewell speech to attack his own constituents and complain he wasn't paid enough.

He thanked his wife—who Burley paid from the public purse—for dealing with "rude and awkward" people in his Cannock Chase seat.

He then added that the problem of being an MP was the, "often unwarranted media intrusion into every aspect of your and your family's life."

Presumably the type of unreasonable intrusion that saw him asked about buying a Nazi uniform for his friend's stag party.

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Angry victims walk out of medical disaster inquiry

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

CAMPAIGNERS BRANDED a public inquiry into the worst treatment disaster in the history of the NHS a “whitewash” last week.

In the 1970s and 1980s, 5,000 haemophilia patients and others were treated with HIV and Hepatitis C contaminated blood products and not informed for years.

The Penrose Inquiry was set up in 2008 to investigate the contaminated blood disaster in Scotland.

It has made only one recommendation—that everyone in Scotland who had a blood transfusion before September 1991 is to be offered a test for Hepatitis C.

Victims and their supporters walked out of the launch of the inquiry’s report and burned copies.

As many as 2,000 people have died over the last 30 to 40 years and thousands more are still fighting for justice. David Cameron offered an apology to the victims.

Expected

The Tainted Blood campaign responded to the inquiry’s final report.

It said, “We expected more than a 30 second apology from the prime minister, and an ‘in passing’ agreement from Labour leader Ed Miliband to follow up what is already a half-hearted single recommendation from the Penrose report.”

The British government covered up the scandal and never admitted any responsibility.

The World Health Organisation warned it not to import blood products from the US. But it carried on regardless.

The US paid prisoners to give blood. Studies had shown as early as 1958 that prisoners were one of the highest risk groups of people living with HIV and Hepatitis C.

VICTIMS AND supporters burning the Penrose Inquiry report

Medical Inspectorate reports show that the blood transfusion labs were more like abattoirs and were condemned under health and safety laws.

One victim, the late Gary Kelly, wrote in Socialist Worker a year before the Penrose Inquiry began.

He said, “The government is guilty of murder by not taking the precautions that it was warned it needed to take.

“Our lives have been destroyed and that of our families, by a government who put commercial interests

before our health.”

Rather than pay £5 per blood screening kit, the Department of Health preferred to invent its own test.

Delayed

This did not work, so the introduction of testing was delayed. And Scottish ministers were not informed.

The inquiry revealed that blood donated by prisoners was still being collected in Scotland as late as 1984 but concluded only that this was “unfortunate”.

A close friend of Gary spoke to Socialist Worker about his struggle for justice.

He said, “Proper counselling and financial support were replaced by anger, depression, anxiety and smoking, culminating in the heart problems that killed him.

“He became distraught at the number of his group who were dying before they won some degree of recognition. Too many victims have died since. The time for justice is now.”

More information at taintedblood.info

Socialist Worker

MAY DAY GREETINGS



To celebrate May Day, Socialist Worker prints solidarity messages from readers, trade union branches, SWSS groups and campaigns. The deadline to get your message into Socialist Worker is **Wednesday 15 April**

mayday@socialistworker.co.uk

Lawyers would ‘sort out’ statements

A TEAM of South Yorkshire Police (SYP) officers reviewed police statements in the wake of the 1989 Hillsborough football disaster, inquests have heard.

Some 96 Liverpool fans died as a result of the disaster.

Peter Hayes, who was SYP’s deputy chief constable at the time, began giving evidence to fresh inquests on Monday of this week.

Hayes agreed that senior officers were asked to prepare their accounts and then lawyers would “sort them out”. But he said he didn’t know what that meant.

Hayes told the jury he understood that “speculation and comment” was removed from statements on lawyers’ advice. SYP chief constable



A Hillsborough memorial

Peter Wright said officers should produce “aide-memoires” of their recollections and should include information on “crowd behaviour”.

A document from a chief inspector written to a constable three days after the disaster referred to the aide-memoires.

“As time progresses, and by discussing with colleagues, other facts may come to mind, these details can be added to this record and dated accordingly,” it said.

Hayes said that using police pocketbooks would not be “appropriate”, as it was easier to “update” separately recorded recollections.

The inquests continue.

Sadie Robinson

IN BRIEF

Israel boycott vote in Sussex

SUSSEX University Student Union has voted overwhelmingly to boycott Israeli goods.

The vote means that the students union should now campaign for the university to end its contract with waste firm Veolia, which operates in Israeli settlements.

Sweets Way housing fight

A JUDGE has ruled that residents occupying the Sweets Way estate in north London must be evicted.

The ruling also granted an injunction preventing any future protests on the estate.

Residents quickly occupied a new building just outside of the ruling’s parameters.

Sixty B&Q stores to close

RETAILER KING Fisher has announced that it will shut 60 of its B&Q hardware stores across Britain and Ireland.

Trade unions have spoken out against the closures.

The number of job losses has not yet been announced.

Tory failure on insulation

GOVERNMENTS HAVE failed to tackle energy efficiency in homes, a new report by watchdog Which has found.

The Tories promised to be the “greenest government ever”.

But the report clearly blames the failure on the government’s Green Deal scheme.

IN THIS WEEK

1968

Martin Luther King assassinated

US civil rights leader Martin Luther King was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee on 4 April.

Millions across the world who wanted an end to racism and the Vietnam war mourned.

US cities exploded in rebellion.

Tories and Labour eye the rich as election race begins

by SADIE ROBINSON

THE GENERAL election campaign is officially underway—and many people are bored of it already.

The lack of choice on offer was laid bare in a non-debate between Tory prime minister David Cameron and Labour Party leader Ed Miliband last week.

The mainstream media said presenter Jeremy Paxman gave Cameron a “mauling”.

In fact Cameron managed to keep talking for as long as possible to cut the amount of questions he’d have to avoid answering.

Miliband briefly got on the front foot when he talked about standing up to the energy firms and banks, and helping people out of work.

Unfortunately his party can’t be relied on to stand up for ordinary people.

As shadow work and pensions secretary Rachel Reeves helpfully put it, “We are not the party of people on benefits.”

“We don’t want to be seen, and we’re not, the party to represent those who are out of work.”

Labour has taunted the Tories’ attacks on working class people and welfare. Cameron likes to talk of supporting “hard working families”—but spoke of freezing in-work benefits last week.

Benefits
Both party leaders somehow managed to talk about the thing that supposedly no-one can ever talk about—immigration.

And both vowed to make it harder for people to come to Britain—although some people seem to be more problematic than others.

Miliband said Labour could “get low skill migration down”—so presumably rich migrants would still be welcome.

Many people were understandably outraged at the Labour Party mug that pledged controls on



Rachel Reeves

BACK STORY

David Cameron launched the general election campaign by saying “Britain is on the right track”

- Since the Tories came to office in 2010 more than 500,000 council workers have lost their jobs
- Some £3.5 billion has been cut from the adult social care budget
- And around 3,300 jobs in mental health nursing have gone
- But shamefully Labour have said they will not reverse cuts

DAVID CAMERON launched the election campaign outside Downing Street on Monday of this week

Austerity is fuelling NHS crisis—but bosses plan even more cuts

DAVID CAMERON last week pledged to bring in a “truly seven-day NHS”, if the Tories get back in—by smashing health workers’ pay structure.

The plan to bring in seven-day working was first proposed last October by NHS England boss Simon Stevens in his Five Year Forward View.

It was drafted after he admitted the health service is facing an £8 billion black hole. Now bosses want to get more out of workers for less.

Tory health secretary Jeremy Hunt said that he would give the NHS an extra £8 billion—but only while cutting it by a further £22 billion.

Pay

Bosses will have to dismantle workers’ pay structures in order to bring in seven-day working.

Millions of people across Britain are sick of the Tories and austerity.

We need a real alternative.

There’s nothing wrong with

it says workers are struggling to provide quality of care in Accident and Emergency and for routine operations. Health trusts’ deficits are also ballooning.

Labour has pledged to repeal some aspects of the hated Health and Social Care Act.

Yet it is still committed to Tory cuts and won’t roll back privatisation.

But there’s a mood to fight for the NHS.

Privatisation

Up to 1,800 people marched against NHS privatisation in Leeds and around 700 in Nottingham.

In Dundee hospital porters in the Unite union fighting over pay are set to go on indefinite strike from 7 April. We need to generalise that fight.

The leaders of the health unions said they would fight over unsocial hours. Now that Cameron has announced the attack, it needs to be met with a serious response.

Tomas Tengely-Evans

seven-day working in the NHS. But the Tories’ plans are about smashing health workers’ pay and creating a more “flexible” workforce with fewer rights.

It’s part of the attack on the NHS as a whole that is plunging it further into crisis.

A recent report by the Kings Fund health think tank said that the NHS is deteriorating in a way not seen since the 1990s.

NHS ENGLAND boss Simon Stevens

INTERNATIONAL

Student movement takes on government in Quebec

STUDENTS IN the Canadian province of Quebec have gone on “strike” over the regional government’s austerity plans.

They are also calling for an end to the use of fossil fuels.

Around 45,000 students in the ASSÉ student union walked out on Monday of last week.

Daily protests have been met with heavy police repression, with police using baton charges and firing teargas at protesters.

One woman was left with severe burns when a police officer fired a teargas canister in her face from point-blank range.

The movement is similar to Quebec’s Maple Spring of 2012—a “student strike” which lasted several months and stopped a planned rise in tuition fees.

But the scope of this new movement is much larger.

And there is the possibility that workers could join the fightback.

The Liberal government’s budget is based on severe public sector cuts to health, education and social services.

Quebec unions and other groups held large protests against the anticipated austerity plans last February.

There is also the possibility of a major union confrontation in

the public sector.

The Front Commun—a new coalition between unions—means student calls for a “social strike” could become a real possibility.

A Quebec-wide anti-austerity protest was set to go ahead on Thursday of this week.

It is set to be followed by a climate march in Montreal on 11 April and a mass protest on May Day. Nick Clark

This was quickly shot down by the Institute for Fiscal Studies who showed there was no evidence that this was true.

The Tories just ignored the flak and moved on to their next round of figures they think will convince voters to put them back into Downing Street.

All they are trying to do is throw mud in the hope that some of it sticks.

David Cameron’s next claim was that the Tories are committed to bringing more jobs. The figures for unemployment appear to show that unemployment is lower than it has been for years.

But again the figures don’t tell the whole story. The Tories slashed jobs in the public sector

NIGERIA

Elections are extended

THE VOTES in Nigeria’s presidential election were still being counted as Socialist Worker went to press.

President Goodluck Jonathan has presided over deepening inequality and corruption.

His challenger is ex-military ruler from the poorer north of the country, Muhammadu Buhari.

Buhari has won

support for his

promises to root out

from February. It claimed that the army was dealing with Boko Haram and could not guarantee security.

The election was extended in some areas into a second day because of problems with electronic voting card readers introduced to combat fraud.

In one area police attacked women opposition protesters complaining about election officials rigging ballots.

The government had postponed the elections for six weeks

But the government wants to use the attack to justify a crackdown on dissent.

They have called for a “social truce” between bosses and workers. Activists are opposed to the kind of unity that puts an end to recent strikes.

The demand of unity in the face of the attacks chimes with ordinary Tunisians.

They had already protested in their thousands immediately after the attack.

Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

ELECTION STARTS—BUILD SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

EVERY DAY for the next five weeks we will be bombarded by claims and counter claims by politicians and their spin machines.

We will get lies and accusations and countless statistics about everything from the economy to the NHS and housing.

The Tories opened the campaign claiming that families would be £3,000 worse off if Labour won the election.

This means they are off the unemployed list but can’t earn enough to survive on the hours and wages they earn.

The announcement that inflation is now at zero has led many commentators to say that

wages will be worth more and everyone will feel better off.

Lower prices will be welcome for millions struggling in poverty. But it is not automatic that workers will have more money to pay their bills.

Workers’ wages are not predicted to even get back to the pre-recession level for at least another five years.

So there is a lot of catching up to do before the mass of ordinary people feel better off.

Bosses may even use the zero inflation rate as yet another excuse to limit pay increases.

Working class people know what the reality of Tory rule means—whatever new announcement or billboard slogan they come up with.

The Socialist Workers Party is standing candidates as part of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) because Labour is not even claiming it will turn this situation around.

Instead Ed Miliband says that he is committed to cuts, just fewer and slower than the Tories.

We need to fight for a socialist alternative to the politicians who want to give us five more years of austerity and scapegoating.

blamed migrants for putting pressure on schools and hospitals.

It’s rank hypocrisy from the millionaire who has slashed services.

The real pressure on services isn’t migrants—it’s austerity.

Labour offers no alternative.

The racist Ukip party attacked the Tories on Tuesday of this week for missing their target to cut the number of migrants coming to Britain.

And Labour will still make cuts if elected.

The mainstream parties have opened the door to Ukip by constantly scapegoating migrants.

They then use the growth of Ukip to justify pandering to its racism, claiming they have to engage with ordinary people’s “genuine concerns”.

Many people do think immigration is a problem. But that’s because it is rammed down their throats by politicians and the press.

The Tories want us to blame migrants for problems in society because they don’t want the blame to fall on them. We should have no truck with it.

REJECT RACIST LIES

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Jacqui Freeman, Lee Number and Glyn Robbins make the socialist case for education, housing and social care. Plus: Mark L Thomas on why the Labour Party is so weak. Costas Pittas on Greek workers’ resistance to the Troika. Ron Margulies on the centenary of the Armenian genocide.

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ANALYSIS

PANOS GARGANAS



Left needs to fight Syriza compromises

FOR TWO months now, the European Union (EU) and European Central Bank (ECB) have been piling pressure on Greece's new Syriza-led government. A word closer to reality might even be blackmail.

Under the "memorandum of agreement" signed by the previous Tory government, Greece was supposed to receive the final instalment of its second 7.2 billion euro (£5.2 billion) bailout. The money would not be used on wages or pensions, but would go straight back to Greece's lenders.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is to receive 5.3 billion euro (£3.8 billion) until June and the ECB 6.7 billion euro (£4.9 billion) in the summer. But the "Eurogroup" of finance ministers is refusing to give the money to the new government. It's demanding that Syriza drops its election promises and adapts its programme to the same mix of cuts and privatisation.

On top of that, the ECB has imposed a legal ban on Greek banks forbidding them from buying treasury bills—debt—from the Greek state.

They are effectively forcing the Syriza government to use funds meant for the health service, universities and local authorities to meet its IMF payments.

What is the rationale behind this? Is it because the economy is in a worse state than it was last year? The answer is no. The European institutions agree with the government that the economy is set to grow slightly this year and the budget will have a surplus of 1.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Will this kind of pressure make the Greek debt sustainable? The answer is again no. Without a reduction in the debt level, the economy would have to produce very high budget surpluses for such a long time that nobody believes this is on the horizon.

Fightback

The reasons for the EU pressure are political. The workers' fightback against austerity in Greece has reduced the traditional ruling parties to impotence.

The Labour-type Pasok party has been in government longer than any other party since the Junta collapsed in 1974. Now it's just close to the 3 percent threshold for entering parliament. The Tory-type New Democracy is trailing Syriza by over 20 percentage points.

The EU institutions are effectively the guardians of the system for the Greek ruling class, making sure that the left is tamed.

The Syriza leadership is adapting to this. It has dropped the demand for even a partial cancellation of the debt. It has declared that keeping Greece inside the eurozone is a top priority.

After prime minister Alexis Tsipras met German chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin, the government submitted a "list of reforms" to the Eurogroup. It's all done in the spirit of strengthening the budget surplus through cuts and privatisation.

To prove the point, deputy prime minister Yannis Dragasakis said last Friday that the government is selling its 67 percent share in the port of Piraeus. This breaks a pledge not to sell the port that Syriza repeated when it was first elected.

There is opposition to this adaptation. The dockers' unions are furious at the port sell-off. ERT media workers from Thessalonica are coming to Athens next week alongside other groups, such as the cement workers from Chalkida, to demand their jobs back. The anti-capitalist left coalition Antarsya supports these struggles and argues for a break with the euro and cancelling the debt.

Some commentators say that Syriza has no mandate to break with the euro. But then many of the same voices add that going back on its election promises for the sake of staying in the euro is "a reasonable compromise".

Apparently, breaking your promises does not require a special mandate, but breaking with the bankers' Europe is a "nationalist, third-worldist" perspective.

It all goes to show that the parliamentary road to change is a one-way street to compromise. Satisfying the workers' demands and breaking with the EU blackmail means that the left needs a revolutionary strategy away from the old parliamentary wisdom.

Unison delegates overturn leadership in historic vote

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

HUNDREDS OF Unison union delegates voted to restart their local government pay campaign on Tuesday of last week. They overturned the position of the union's leadership.

Delegates at the special one-day conference—which was forced by the membership—voted by two to one to restart the fight for a higher pay rise for 2015–2016.

"People are still a bit shocked at what happened," Kirklees Unison branch chair Nick Ruff told Socialist Worker.

It was an historic decision and a bruising experience for Unison's leadership.

Delegates heavily criticised it for suspending pay strikes in England and Wales last October.

Poverty

Despite Tory claims that workers are better off, anger at poverty wages has made local government workers determined to fight.

Nick said, "Our pay campaign showed both the fear and the anger.

"When we struck last July it gave people the chance to express their anger.

"But you saw the fear being exploited when the leadership called it off in October, claiming it was the best we could achieve."

The rotten two-year deal that was cobbled together is little better than the 1 percent pay offer that members had overwhelmingly rejected.

Workers were furious that it left many worse off.

Ameen Hadi from Salford City Unison told Socialist



PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

UNISON MEMBERS strike on 10 July last year (above) and union general secretary Dave Prentis (left)

"Members thought the leadership didn't have the stomach for a fight. What I liked was that people were fighting back—it was clear people feel we need leadership."

Argument

Nick agreed. "Where an argument was put to reject the pay deal it was won significantly," he said.

Ameen added, "Everyone is asking what we do now."

As the news filters through workplaces, rank and file workers will be pleased the leadership got a kicking.

But they will be looking for answers.

Activists need to organise workplace meetings to report back and build on that mood.

Unison members have

shown they want to fight for a decent pay rise.

But it is one thing to win a vote—it is another to get the campaign restarted.

The lack of real lead given from the national union dampened workers' mood.

That's why it's significant that a slate of candidates are putting forward a left challenge to the leadership in the union's national executive elections that open next week.

The left in the union needs to relate to that mood on the ground and pressure union leaders to act on last week's decisions.

Unison members spoke to Socialist Worker in a personal capacity. Vote for a fighting leadership—find out more at reclaimtheunion.blogspot.co.uk

South Yorkshire cops investigated

THE INDEPENDENT Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) is investigating over 100 allegations against 42 named South Yorkshire police officers.

The complaints relate to how police handled child sexual exploitation (CSE).

The officers include both serving and retired cops.

The IPCC said more have yet to be identified. Allegations include "suggestions of corrupt relationships between police officers and offenders". They also include "neglect of duty by failing to adequately

investigate".

A report by professor Alexis Jay last year estimated that 1,400 children had suffered CSE in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, over a 16 year period.

South Yorkshire Police received 658 referrals relating to CSE between April 2014 and February this year.

It recorded 244 offences relating to CSE over the same period.

Sadie Robinson

Revealed—Rotherham cops linked to child sexual abuse scandal bit.ly/1F9Gu80

FIGURE IT OUT

1,400

children had suffered child sexual exploitation in Rotherham, South Yorkshire a report estimated

100

allegations against South Yorkshire Police are being investigated by the police watchdog

42

South Yorkshire police officers being investigated

Bosses feel the heat as support for strike rises

National Gallery workers are organising to pile pressure on their bosses, reports Annette Mackin

WORKERS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY in central London completed their latest five-day walkout last Saturday.

They have struck for a total of 17 days this year against bosses' plans to privatisate 400 out of 600 gallery staff.

Workers were set to meet on Wednesday of this week to decide on the next round of action. There are calls to escalate the action if bosses continue to refuse to stop the proposals.

The PCS union launched a People's Inquiry into the Future of the National Gallery at a meeting in parliament on Tuesday of last week.

Strikers and supporters discussed strategies to put pressure on gallery bosses, who are refusing to attend Acas conciliation talks with the union.

PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka told the meeting, "We need to build maximum pressure on people who are very hardnosed."

As well as backing more industrial action Serwotka said the union was also "considering the practicalities of having a major protest rally in Trafalgar Square on the doorstep of the gallery".

Gallery bosses suspended PCS rep Candy Udwin in January before the first five-day walkout. They also sent the union a six-page letter targeting other activists at the gallery.

Pivotal

Serwotka said, "Candy is bearing the brunt, and we are supporting her absolutely. Her reinstatement must be pivotal to solving this dispute."

The tendering process happens just days before the general election. Workers also want to use any action to put pressure on MPs to put a moratorium on the privatisation plans.

On Thursday of last week strikers staged a rally outside the gallery in Trafalgar Square as part

BACK STORY

Private security firm CIS is set to take over the running of some services at the National Gallery

- Some 400 out of 600 gallery jobs will be privatised if the plans go ahead
- The privatisation would mean a fall in workers' pay and conditions
- Bosses have also suspended PCS union rep Candy Udwin
- Workers have fought back with 17 days of strikes since January—and there are calls to escalate

of a national day of action against privatisation.

Following the rally, strikers blocked traffic as they marched to Downing Street to hand in a letter demanding that the privatisation be halted.

Solidarity events took place around the country, and strikers have been on speaking tours to Leeds, Barnsley, Huddersfield, Cardiff and Bristol.

Solidarity

One striker described his solidarity trip to South Yorkshire. He said, "The support that we got was amazing—we raised £1,300 for the hardship fund."

Left wing film maker Ken Loach, who was also at the rally, told Socialist Worker about his support for the strike and Candy.

He said, "I've known Candy for a number of years. Everyone who meets her has a lot of respect for her. It's typical that the gallery has gone for somebody who is articulate and clear, and committed to the people she works with."

Candy said, "We're up against it inside the gallery, but it's the support we've got from outside that's kept us going."

Information about donating to the strike fund and inviting strikers to speak can be found at ngnotforsale.wordpress.com



NATIONAL GALLERY strikers march on Downing Street last week

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

SCOTLAND

SNP conference shows a thirst for an alternative to austerity in Scotland

by RAYMIE KIERNAN in Glasgow

SCOTTISH NATIONAL Party (SNP) leader Nicola Sturgeon made her biggest pitch yet for the Labour vote in Scotland at the SNP's spring conference last weekend.

Addressing up to 3,000 mostly new members in Glasgow, Sturgeon said, "If there is a hung parliament the SNP will vote to stop a Tory government getting off the ground."

She called on the Labour Party to join them and "lock David Cameron out of Downing Street".

Scrap

It was also announced that the SNP would back Labour's pledges to restore the 50p top rate of income tax and scrap zero hours contracts and the bedroom tax.

The SNP now claims a membership over 102,000. The old certainties of Scottish politics are crumbling. Labour could lose dozens of its MPs to the SNP.

Bitterness at Labour's years of failure to fight for working class interests and offer real alternative to Tory austerity has helped fuel the SNP surge.

Eileen and Stella are two new members from West Dunbartonshire who were at the conference. Both are 100 percent

against the cuts.

"I joined because I hate Westminster and what it is doing," Stella told Socialist Worker. "Austerity has been a nightmare."

"I helped out with a soup kitchen last weekend in Glasgow. Hundreds came to get fed and clothed. Many people are just one step away from being homeless."

The SNP is seen as the anti-austerity party that will put an end to the disgrace of food banks and attacks on the most vulnerable people in society.

It's an image Nicola Sturgeon does nothing to dispel.

"I'm absolutely confident she'll eradicate austerity in an

independent Scotland," Eileen told Socialist Worker.

But there is a mismatch between the anti-austerity image and the reality of the SNP in government or in control of a local council.

Eileen seemed bemused that trade unionists and socialists were lobbying the conference arguing for no cuts. "I've not heard anything inside that contradicts what they are calling for," she said.

SNP-run Dundee Council's £17 million cuts this year was news to Eileen. "That can't be true," she said.

Uncomfortable

But it is true. And that is not the only uncomfortable fact for anti-cuts activists who have joined the SNP looking for an alternative to austerity.

SNP leaders admit they are only calling for a "modest rise in real terms spending", which means continuing cuts.

They may be less than Labour or the Tories but we deserve better than that.

That's why it's right to fight for an alternative now and not wait for the 2016 Scottish elections.

The anti-austerity left needs to be as strong as possible—we should start that fight now.

Visit the TUSC website at tusc.org.uk

West backs Saudi Arabia in launching attacks on Yemen

The attacks on Yemen highlight the problems US imperialism faces as it tries to reassert its control over the region, writes Ken Olende

SAUDI ARABIA is leading an alliance of ten countries in a military assault on Yemen. It has carried out days of bombing raids on cities across the poorest country in the region.

The Saudis are threatening a ground invasion involving 150,000 troops.

Among civilians killed are at least six children and 45 people in a refugee camp in northern Yemen.

The alliance includes other Gulf states, Egypt's military regime and Pakistan. The US and Britain support the attack as Saudi Arabia is a close ally.

Present

The Saudi Sunni regime wants to restore president Abdabbuh Mansour Hadi.

He was installed after Yemenis forced out dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh in 2012 as part of the Arab revolutions.

The Saudis are attacking the Iranian-backed Houthi militias. They forced Hadi to flee from the capital Sana'a to the southern city of Aden.

For many years the south has been demanding independence from Sana'a.

The Houthis have been buffeted by complex regional politics. In Yemen attempts at radical change are repeatedly pushed into sectarian strife.

Yemen's population is roughly two thirds Sunni and one third Shia Muslim. The Houthis follow the Zaydi Shia sect and the militia comes from the northern mountains that border Saudi Arabia.

The Houthis are now allied with

Who arms Saudi Arabia?

SAUDI ARABIA is a key ally of Western imperialism.

When the previous ruler king Abdullah died in January the British government ordered flags to be flown at half mast.

They also keep it heavily armed.

The Saudi military includes 75,000 soldiers in the army, 13,500 in the navy and 20,000 in the air force.

The Saudi army has 600 heavy tanks, 780 light armoured vehicles and 1,423

BACK STORY

Iranian-backed Houthi fighters have forced out Yemeni president Abdabbuh Mansour Hadi

- Hadi was installed after people in Yemen rose up against dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh in 2012
- But Hadi crushed the movement, fuelling Houthi rebellion in the north and calls for independence in the south
- Saleh wants to use the Houthi rebellion to get back into power
- But Saudi Arabia—backed by the west—wants to reinstate Hadi

Saleh, who still controls much of the Yemeni military despite being in exile in Saudi Arabia.

Saleh hopes the Houthi rebellion might help him return to power.

The last time the Saudi military led an incursion into Yemen to attack Houthi militias in 2009 it was repulsed with the loss of 133 troops.

The Saudis claimed the humiliating defeat was down to Iran's support for the Houthis. In Yemen the Saudi forces are effectively allied with Al Qaida.

This latest attack highlights the region's instability as Western imperialism tries to regain control.

While the US is backing this invasion of Yemen to overthrow the Iranian-backed Houthi militia, it is also bombing Tikrit to support an Iranian-backed militia against Isis.

And as Socialist Worker went to press, US-Iranian talks over Iran's nuclear capabilities were nearing their deadline for agreement.

armoured troop carriers.

Its air force is equipped with 313 fighter jets, including US F-15s, British Tornados and Eurofighter Typhoons, as well as helicopters.

Air defence is considered a priority.

Its air defences and deterrents include 16 batteries of US Patriot missiles, 17 batteries of French Shahine missiles, 16 US Hawk missiles and 73 Crotale/Shahine missile units.



PEOPLE IN Yemen search for survivors in rubble following a Saudi air raid

FRANCE

French voters hammer government but Tories and fascists make gains

THE FRENCH local election results last weekend signalled a major rightward shift in the country.

Support plummeted for president Francois Hollande's Labour-type Socialist Party (PS) in the departmental elections.

Disillusionment with his government's austerity programme has seen votes surge for the Tory Popular Movement (UMP) party and their allies.

Exit polls suggest that the UMP, led by former president Nicolas Sarkozy, has taken control of between 65 and 71 local councils—up from 41.

This means the UMP now have control of about two thirds of local councils.

But the fascists also made worrying gains.

The fascist Front National (FN)

has gained 62 seats—up from the two it won in the 2011 elections. It also took a quarter of the vote share.

Nazis Ligue du Sud, a split from the FN, also won four seats, taking the total of seats gained by fascists to 66.

The FN did not take control of any local councils as they had hoped. But they still got unprecedented results in the election for this level of government.

The result is another step forward for fascism in France. FN leader Marine Le Pen herself greeted the news.

She announced, "The goal is near, reaching power and applying our ideas to redress France."

The elections were to choose 4,108 local councillors.

In the first round of the elections the FN won more than 5 million votes, standing nearly 4,000 candidates in 93 percent of localities.

The departmental elections are usually difficult for outsider parties to make any inroads.

But the gains of the FN show just how successful it has been in putting down roots in the country. And it uses the veneer of respectability around elections to do this.

In the European elections last year it won 25 percent of the vote.

More than 10,000 people around France marched against racism the day before the first round of the elections.

Building on this base can help push back the gains of the fascists.

Annette Mackin

The death of a tyrant

LAST WEEK saw the funeral of Lee Kuan Yew, the repressive and corrupt leader of Singapore. He won't be mourned by any who believe in democracy and social justice.

Lee came to power by courting the British. He was an "anti-communist" alternative when the left was very influential.

He used non-communist socialist organisations to win his first election, then turned on them and repressed the entire left.

Elections were a sham. Lee used the corrupt courts to ban opposition politicians from running for office. He detained activists without trial and tortured his opponents.

Despite boasting of very tough anti-corruption laws, Singaporean politicians voted themselves huge salaries. Their cronies and relatives gained wealth and influence from managing state enterprises or controlling those which were later privatised.

Singapore was a firm supporter of Burma's junta.

Lee and his cronies justified their repressive regime by claiming that it conformed to "Asian values" and not "Western" democracy. This has been the excuse of tyrants in many Asian countries.

Singapore is a very unequal society. Many workers are excluded from the much publicised housing and social benefits system for citizens.

The law punishes people for chewing gum, oral sex or not flushing the toilet. People are regularly flogged for petty crimes.

That is Lee's legacy.

Giles Ji Ungpakorn
Oxford

I grew up in care, now I'm locked in detention

I'VE BEEN in an immigration detention centre for almost 18 months.

I came to Britain aged nine to live with my sister, but was taken into care at 12. I grew up here. Britain made me who I am.

My whole family are British citizens, and I could've been one too. But my social worker never applied for me, and I was too young to understand how important it would be.

I know that I am British. I committed a crime, but I was a ten year old with a



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

Vile Clarkson was no joke

IT'S SHOCKING that over a million people signed a petition to reinstate ex-TV presenter Jeremy Clarkson. He was sacked by the BBC for assaulting a colleague.

His sacking is a good step. But why had the BBC kept him on for so long despite his repeated racist remarks?

Some say it's "banter" or "just a laugh". But as a rich white male, Clarkson isn't on the receiving end of the ideologies he represents.

Blythe Taylor
West London

Don't collude with racists

EX-TORY candidate Afzal Amin's collusion with the Nazi EDL shows how cynically politicians use racism.

The majority of people oppose racism.

Mass movements have stopped EDL marches. I was one of 10,000 who marched against racism in London last month.

Most people know you don't accommodate to racism, or "negotiate" with those who peddle it.

Sasha Simic
East London

Royal road to baffling Ukip

TORY, UKIP and EDL racists also tend to be royalists.

It blows their brains when I remind them that Prince Philip is a first generation immigrant and the next king will be second generation.

The royals only took the surname Windsor 100 years ago. The name Saxe-Coburg-Gotha was embarrassing when going to war with Germany.

Gareth Hopcyn
Stockport

Trolls defend colonialism

I'M disappointed and outraged by the arrogance and ignorance of British people who write comments on YouTube videos about the Falkland Islands.

Many are evidently still very proud of British colonialism. I see in the articles you publish a totally different attitude.

But I wonder if the majority of British people are more like those YouTubers or like you.

Juan Curiuni
By email

Our demonstration makes a difference

THE STAND Up to Racism demonstration in London on 21 March was really inspiring. It brought together different groups that are fighting back.

I came down from Harlow on a coach, which was nearly full.

There were LGBT and migrant rights groups, and

it was diverse with people from different backgrounds.

It was important to make a stand against racism. It has not gone away.

I work in mental health. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people are disproportionately sectioned.

The rise of the racist Ukip party also concerns me a lot because they're making it acceptable to be racist.

We've got to take action, and we need power in numbers.

In Harlow we're going to continue campaigning. We're out every Saturday leafleting against Ukip's racism.

Ferial
Harlow



A protester on 21 March

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

TTOOK just four seconds for an armed police officer to fatally shoot Mark Duggan. But the whitewash has taken nearly four years.

On 4 August 2011 at 6.12pm, unmarked police cars forced a silver Toyota Lucida minicab to a stop on Ferry Lane in Tottenham, north London.

Mark was the back seat passenger. Moments later he lay dying on the pavement, shot in the arm and chest by a police firearms officer. A handgun partially wrapped in a black sock was found just over four metres away.

Last week the police's pet watchdog Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) published its report into the shooting.

It cleared the firearms officer, known as V53, of any wrongdoing. It upheld his "honest belief" that Mark was armed and beginning to aim a gun when he shot him.

It also concluded that Mark was "in the process of throwing the firearm as he was shot"—and the gun was on the grass because he threw it there.

Right wing newspapers were crowing. The Daily Mail called Mark a "violent gangster". In the Evening Standard he was an "armed criminal".

But the IPCC's conclusions don't add up.

The jury at the 2013 inquest into Mark's death concluded that he was not armed when police shot him. And the version of events described by V53, and the IPCC's conclusions, raise more questions.

V53 joined the police in 1997. In 2001 he joined the Territorial Support Group (TSG). The TSG is a public order unit based in London and the Home Counties. It replaced the Special Patrol Group in 1987.

During V53's time in the TSG he trained to become a firearms officer.

He declined to be questioned for the IPCC's investigation.

Detailed

But at the inquest into Mark's death he gave a detailed picture of seeing him holding a gun. V53 said, "The only way I can describe it is like a freeze frame moment."

"I had lovely peripheral vision, my focus turned immediately to what was in his hand."

"Mark Duggan is carrying a handgun in his right hand. I can see the handle of the weapon, I can make out the trigger guard, I can make out the barrel and it's side-on to his body and there's a black sock covering that weapon."

V53 claimed he perceived a threat

MARK DUGGAN: A DEATH RETOLED

The police shot and killed Mark Duggan in 2011. Now their supporters are rewriting history after a new IPCC report let the cops off the hook. But the facts don't fit their tidy narrative, as Annette Mackin discovers

and so fired his gun. He said he shot Mark on his chest to the right, which "caused like a flinching movement, and then the gun has now moved and is now pointing towards my direction."

This would explain why the trajectory of the bullet that hit Mark's chest was at a considerable downward angle.

It suggests he was falling forwards after being wounded in his arm.

The IPCC report conceded that Mark "was more likely than not to have been stooped".

Military surgeon Jonathan Clasper also reasoned that Mark was not directly facing the person who shot him when he was shot in the chest. If this is the case, how could Mark have been "flinching" and aiming a weapon at V53?

The IPCC report argued, "The sequence in which the two shots

impacted upon Mr Duggan does not affect the question of whether he had a non-fatal wound to his right arm. He argued he was then shot through his chest, causing the wound that killed him."

But V53 claims to have "reassessed" after firing the first, non-fatal shot. Under questioning at the inquest he said he couldn't be "100 percent sure" about the order of the shots.

Sequence

How V53 could give such a clear description of seeing Mark with the weapon, but not be clear about the sequence of shots, is not explained.

Out of 11 officers at the scene only V53 and another codenamed W70 said they saw a gun.

No independent witnesses reported seeing a gun. The jury at the inquest concluded that Mark was not holding a gun when he was shot.

Witness B saw the shooting and began filming the scene 35 seconds afterwards. He told the inquest that he was convinced that Mark was holding a BlackBerry mobile phone.

Records show Mark had been using a BlackBerry moments before police stopped the minicab.

V53 supposedly had his sights fixed upon Mark holding a gun. Yet he can offer no explanation of how it ended up on the grassed area.

During the inquest assistant coroner Judge Keith Cutler put to V53,

EXHIBIT A: BULLET HOLES



Bullet holes in Mark's jacket suggest he was shot while falling down

No independent witnesses saw a gun. The inquest jury said Mark wasn't holding one

During the inquest assistant coroner Judge Keith Cutler put to V53,

"You're focusing on him, you are looking at him all the time you are not looking away or blinking."

V53 replied, "No." Cutler said, "Suddenly the gun disappears." V53 responded, "It did, sir, yes."

The police said the Trident gun crime operation that led to the shooting was based on intelligence that Mark was looking to collect a handgun.

They trailed him in the days before the shooting. On 4 August they followed him as he took the cab to Burchell Road in Leyton, east London.

The cab driver said a man came to the door and handed Mark a shoebox. Police evidence centres on the claim that the shoebox contained the gun found on the grass and that Kevin Hutchinson-Foster handed Mark the shoebox.

Police knew that Hutchinson-Foster had access to a gun. But they did not make him the focus of their intelligence operation.

It also concluded that Mark was "in the process of throwing the firearm as he was shot"—and the gun was on the grass because he threw it there.

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WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7819 1170 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

GLASGOW

Scotland 2015—why we need a socialist alternative

Speakers, Michael Lavalette (former Preston councillor) and others

Thu 9 Apr, 7.30pm,

Jury's Inn,

80 Jamaica St, G1 4QG

YORK

The vote—how it was won and how it was undermined

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,

Sea Horse Hotel,

4 Fawcett St, YO10 4AH

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

ABERDEEN

Chile 1973—the end of the parliamentary road to socialism

Thu 9 Apr, 7pm,

The Snug, Ma Cameron's,

6-8 Little Belmont St,

AB10 1JG

BARNSLEY

Syriza and socialist strategy

Thu 9 Apr, 6.30pm,

YMCA, Blucher St,

S70 1AP

BIRMINGHAM:CITY CENTRE

Does the media control our minds?

Thu 9 Apr, 7pm,

Priory Rooms,

Quaker Meeting House,

40 Bull St, B4 6AF

BRADFORD

Do we need system change to stop climate change?

Wed 8 Apr, 7pm,

Equity Centre,

Perkin House,

82 Grattan Rd, BD1 2LU

BRIGHTON

West—are we heading for another Cold War?

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,

Friends Meeting House,

Ship St, BN1 1AF

BRISTOL:NORTH

Where does racism come from?

Thu 9 Apr, 7.30pm,

The Canteen, 5th Floor,

Hamilton House,

80 Stokes Croft, BS1 3QY

BRISTOL:SOUTH

How radical are the Greens?

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,

YHA, Narrow Quay,

BS1 4QA

CAMBRIDGE

From Selma to Ferguson—the fight for Civil Rights in the US

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,

Shanghai Family Restaurant,

39 Burleigh St, CB1 1DG

CARDIFF

The myth of personal life under capitalism

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,

Cathays Community Centre,

Cathays Terrace, CF24 4HX

CHELMSFORD

Immigration—the myths used to divide us

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,

Friends Meeting House,

Rainsford Rd, CM1 2QL

CHESTERFIELD

How radical are the Greens?

Thu 9 Apr, 7.30pm,

Market Halls,

Market Place, S40 1PB

COLCHESTER

The revolutionary ideas of Antonio Gramsci

Tues 6 Apr, 7.30pm,

The Odd One Out,

28 Mersea Rd, CO2 7ET

COVENTRY

The balance of class forces today—why are there so few strikes?

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,

West Indian Centre,

159 Spon St, CV1 3BB



LONDON:HACKNEY

France—the irresistible rise of Marine Le Pen and the Front National

Thu 9 Apr, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner
Lower Clapton Rd),
E5 0PU

LONDON:HORNSEY AND WOOD GREEN

Are we heading for economic recovery—or another slump?

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,
West Indian Cultural Centre,
9 Clarendon Rd,
Haringey,
N8 0DD

LONDON:ISLINGTON

Are we heading for economic recovery—or another slump?

Thu 9 Apr, 7pm,
The Old Fire Station,
84 Mayton St,
N7 6QT

LONDON:KINGSTON

Malcolm X and the Civil Rights movement

Wed 8 Apr, 7pm,
Kingston Quaker Centre,
Fairfield East, KT1 2PT

LONDON:NEWHAM

Socialists and elections—what's the point of voting?

Wed 8 Apr, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove (next
to Morrisons car park),
E15 1HP

LONDON:SOUTHWARK

From Selma to Ferguson—the fight for Civil Rights in the US

Thu 9 Apr, 7pm,
Snug Room, The Grand Union,
26 Camberwell Grove (off
Camberwell Church St),
SE5 8RE

LONDON:TOTTENHAM

Are we heading for an economic recovery—or another slump?

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,
Kitabevi Cafe,
410 Tottenham High Rd,
N17 9JB

LONDON:TOWER HAMLETS

Is Marxism still relevant today?

Wed 8 Apr, 7pm,
Oxford House,
Derbyshire St (opp Bethnal
Green Rd Tesco),
E2 6HG

LONDON:WALTHAM FOREST

A rebel's guide to Rosa Luxemburg

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,
Quaker Meeting House,
1a Jewel Rd (off Hoe St),
E17 4QU

MANCHESTER:CHORLTON

Are we heading for an economic recovery—or another slump?

Wed 8 Apr, 7pm,
Proof Bar, 30 Manchester Rd,
M21 0BQ

MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE

Can there be a socialist revolution in Britain?

Thu 9 Apr, 7pm,
Friends meeting house,
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

MEDWAY

Socialists and elections—what's the point of voting?

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,
The Nucleus Arts Centre,
Conference Room,
272 High St, Chatham,
ME4 4BP

NEWCASTLE

Syriza and socialist strategy

Thu 9 Apr, 7pm,
The Labour Club,
11 Leazes Park Rd,
NE1 4PF

NEWPORT

Syriza and socialist strategy

Thu 9 Apr, 7.30pm,
Newport Centre, Emlyn Room,
1 Kingsway,
NP20 1UH

NORWICH

Socialists and elections—what's the point of voting?

Thu 23 Apr, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place,
NR2 2SA

NOTTINGHAM

Women in revolution

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,
International
Community Centre,
61b Mansfield Rd,
NG1 3FN

OXFORD

The history of fighting fascism

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,
Restore,
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),
OX4 1YH

PORTSMOUTH

How radical are the Greens?

Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm,
Somerset Central,
Rivers St,
PO5 4EY

SHEFFIELD:CITY CENTRE

The Magna Carta and the struggle for our legal rights

The Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy exhibition is the perfect antidote to the Tories' hypocritical attempts to claim it for their cause, writes Matt Foot

THE TORY attempt to hijack the Magna Carta's 800th anniversary celebration was not a resounding success.

The Tories brought forward the anniversary to allow the Global Law Summit—a pre election business fest.

It was an audacious attempt by David Cameron to recast the charter through a summit where, "Britain continues to lead the way in promoting free enterprise, economic growth, and the rule of law around the world".

The summit was the most rank hypocrisy. This government has removed access to justice from 600,000 people with the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

Criminal

And Chris Grayling, the so-called "minister of justice", is very close to decimating any quality in criminal defence.

However most people saw through this charade. The Magna Carta has some strange clauses, such as on bridgemaking and fish-weirs.

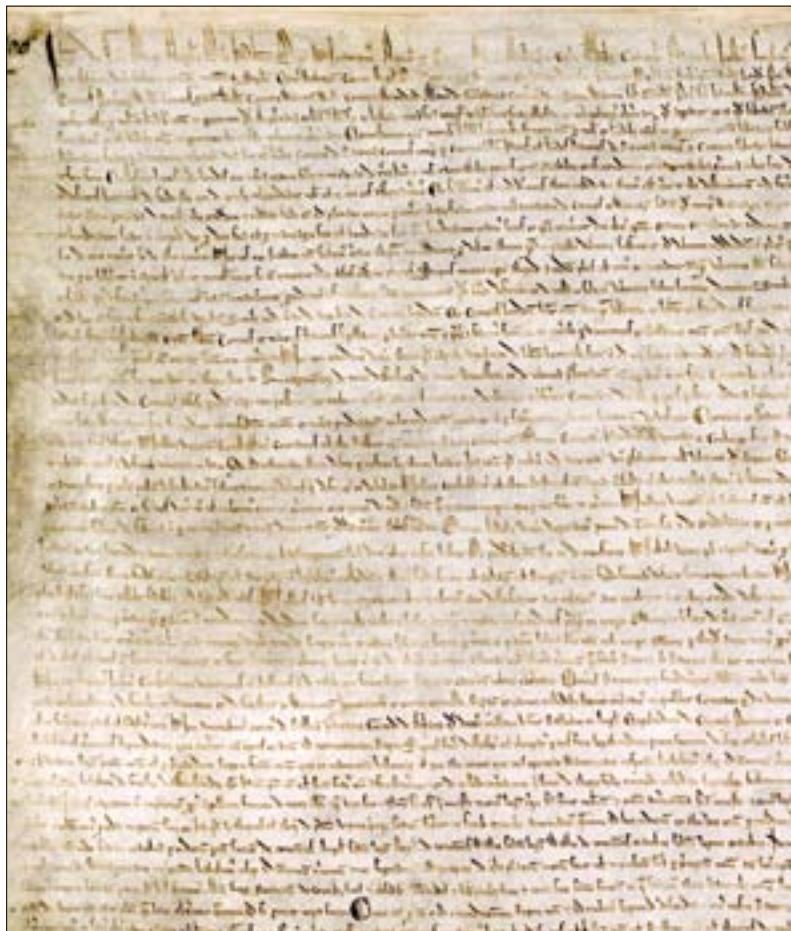
But it has none that say, "Thou shalt chargeth £1,750 per ticket to hear the richest congregation find a 'valuable opportunity to meet and do business'."

Nor did it say, "Inviteth alleged tax avoider Lord Green to make a keynote speech"

In contrast to the summit, I recommend a visit to the Magna Carta: Law, Liberty and Legacy exhibition at the British Library.

The key clause of the charter successfully curtailed the powers of despot King John.

In doing so, it was establishing a



PART OF the Magna Carta in the British Library

revolutionary idea that no one should be denied access to the law—not even by the king.

You can probably give the first room with different versions of the charter a miss.

But from then on it's fascinating. It shows how that principle was

taken up and developed in many high points of struggle since.

It was taken up in 1628 when the Petition of Right was drafted to limit the authority of King Charles I.

The Chartists in the 1830s-40s and the Suffragettes in early 20th century who were demanding universal

suffrage also took it up.

The establishment has always tried to promote the charter for its own causes, such as justifying colonialism.

But the irony is that those fighting for independence drew upon it to demand democracy.

Most famously, Nelson Mandela did so in his three hour speech at the Rivonia Trial in 1964.

But rights are not protected by some ancient law—they constantly have to be fought for.

Equal

We will never be equal legally while society is divided economically.

However, the fight for equality is wrapped up in the fight for equality before the law.

That tradition was represented at the Justice Alliance campaign's relay for rights in defence of legal aid.

The relay walked 42 miles from Runnymede, Surrey where the charter was signed, to deliver Magna Carta to the wretched Global Law Summit. The wonderful actor Maxine Peake delivered its words.

It said, "No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way.

"Nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgement of his equals or by the law of the land.

"To no one will we sell, to no one deny or delay right to justice".

Magna Carta—Law, Liberty, Legacy

The British Library, London NW1 2DB.

Until Tuesday 1 September

Tickets £12 and free for under 18s

Matt Foot is a criminal defence solicitor and co-founder of Justice Alliance

EXHIBITION

EASTERN EXCHANGES—EAST ASIAN CRAFT AND DESIGN

Manchester Art Gallery,
Manchester M3 4PR.
Until 31 May
Free
manchestergalleries.org

WITH MORE than 1,500 years worth of objects from Japan, China and Korea, this exhibition shows the influence and heritage of East Asian craft and design.

ONE DAY, SOMETHING HAPPENS—PAINTINGS OF PEOPLE

Leeds Art Gallery,
Leeds LS1 3AA.
Until 24 May
leeds.gov.uk

This is part of a new Arts Council Collection touring exhibition. It explores how

David Hockney

paintings of figures in everyday situations can still look theatrical.

The exhibition includes the work of pop art veteran David Hockney and surrealist Lucian Freud.

The exhibition will visit Nottingham, Drogheda, Southport and Eastbourne.

TOP 5 BOOKS

Bestsellers at Bookmarks, the socialist Bookshop

1	Celebrating C.L.R. James in Hackney Edited by Christian Hogsbjerg and Gaverne Bennett
2	Rebel's Guide to Eleanor Marx Siobhan Brown
3	Rebel Footprints David Rosenberg
4	Blacklisted Phil Chamberlain and Dave Smith
5	This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate Naomi Klein

Lamar has something to say about racism in the US

MUSIC

TO PIMP A BUTTERFLY

Kendrick Lamar
Out now

I'D HALF decided I wasn't going to like Kendrick Lamar's new album To Pimp A Butterfly. It was released on

iTunes and Spotify in the early hours of Monday morning—who does he think he is, soul artist D'Angelo?

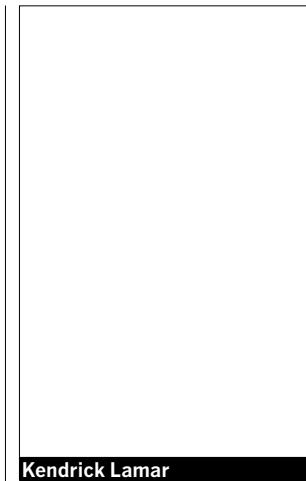
I quite liked his first album Good Kid, MAAD City, but I wasn't ready to

hail him as the saviour of hip hop.

But there are more similarities with D'Angelo's album than the way it was released.

Lamar's is not a typical hip hop album, just like D'Angelo's Black Messiah is not a typical soul album.

It's not easy listening. It requires concentration and thought and at times is more like jazz and spoken word. And like D'Angelo, Lamar is also trying to say something about being black in the US today.



Kendrick Lamar

He grew up in Compton, California, and had run-ins with the police. But Lamar doesn't stay in Compton.

He also rails against the gangs of the "Democrips" and the "Rebloodlicans".

The angriest track on the album, The Blacker The Berry, was penned after the murder of Trayvon Martin three years ago in Florida.

Lamar draws on the styles of 1970s funk and free jazz. The whole thing is both funky and angry.

The experience of racism in the US runs right

through it. While tracks such as "I" will probably get the most commercial air-play, the overall tone is much darker and all the better for it.

After a few days of listening to To Pimp A Butterfly, I'll admit that I really like it.

Kendrick Lamar has released a different and important album.

It's great to see artists step up and have something to say about the current struggles against racism in the US. Liz Wheatley

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Why not visit the shop at 1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE

TWENTY FIVE years ago a riot rocked Britain that would become the first nail in the coffin for hated Tory prime minister Margaret Thatcher.

The 200,000-strong anti poll tax demonstration in London on 31 March 1990 was a huge show of opposition to Thatcher's hated tax.

The tax would snatch the same amount of money from everyone—regardless of wealth. Millions of ordinary people were rightly furious.

Mainstream newspapers and politicians condemned the riot, blaming it on anarchists and revolutionaries.

In reality, police provoked the riot—and protesters were absolutely right to fight back.

The movement against the poll tax was a mass movement. This was its strength.

The tax was first introduced in Scotland in 1989, triggering a non-payment campaign involving millions.

The demonstration on 31 March followed months of working class people organising in towns and cities across Britain.

It set off from Kennington Park in south London at 1pm and headed for Trafalgar Square.

Many people who had never been on a protest before joined it.

Struck

As Trafalgar Square filled with protesters, a section of the march became stuck in Whitehall.

Several hundred cops assembled there to stop marchers getting close to Downing Street.

Protesters described riot cops lying in wait in adjoining streets ready to attack.

Without warning, 40 cops on horses rode through the crowd. Protesters scattered through back streets as they tried to get children and older people to safety.

Police infuriated the crowd by arresting a disabled protester. Chants of "Hillsborough!" went up as people tried to stop police crushing them.

One marcher said, "I couldn't believe it. Perhaps I'm naive but I didn't think the police hit people without a reason."

"But they came for people who were doing nothing."

Meanwhile, there was a carnival atmosphere among demonstrators in Trafalgar Square.



Protesters say, "Kick the Tories Out". The demo was an explosion of rage against Margaret Thatcher

People were hanging banners from scaffolding, dancing and cheering.

Then police attacked.

They came from several entrances to the square, trapping some demonstrators between police in the square and riot cops on Whitehall.

Thousands of demonstrators broke away and spilled into nearby streets.

One marcher said, "The police just went wild. When the police came in it was like a battleground."

The cops kept charging protesters but failed to disperse them. They drove vans and a car at demonstrators at speed with no warning.

Ros Sare came across the protest by chance. "I saw this young girl, about 17, being held down by five policemen with her throat against the railings," she said. "It was awful."

A photograph of Ros was included in a newspaper supplement days after the protest.

It was captioned 'A West End shopper argues with a protester', but that's not what happened at all," she said.

"The truth is, I felt bloody angry that day."

Dozens of demonstrators were injured after police hit them with truncheons. Mail on Sunday newspaper photographer Keith Parnell was one of them.

"I saw this policeman coming at me," he said. "I heard him say, 'You'll do' and then he hit me with his baton. I put my arm up and he hit my forearm, breaking it."

"The police had lost control."

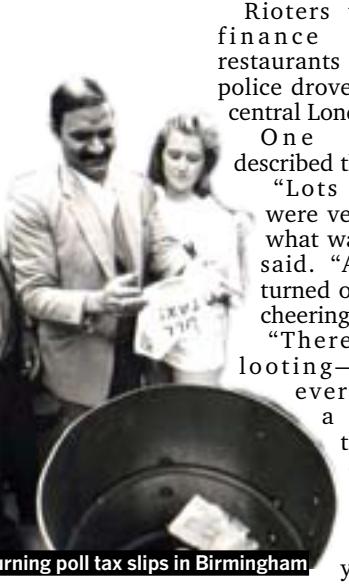
The Mail on Sunday newspaper blamed "anarchist gangs" for the violence.

But people didn't need anarchists or anyone else to tell them to be angry or to fight back.

Their resistance wasn't mindless. Protesters pelted the South African embassy with cans and sticks to show their anger.

THATCHER'S DOWNFALL

The anti poll tax riot in 1990 helped oust Margaret Thatcher. The movement also struck a blow against everyone who said it was impossible to fight back, argues Sadie Robinson



at apartheid.

Rioters targeted banks, finance houses, posh restaurants and fancy cars as police drove protesters across central London.

One demonstrator described the mood.

"Lots of bystanders were very sympathetic to what was going on," they said. "A BMW car was turned over and there was cheering."

"There wasn't much looting—it was more everyone who had a grudge against the rich hitting out at the symbols of money."

The riot released years of pent-up

anger against Thatcher and the Tories.

People who had suffered police attacks during the 1984-85 Miners' Strike or the 1986 Wapping dispute finally felt they were getting their own back.

And it was a blow to everyone, including the Labour Party, who had said it was impossible to fight back against Thatcher.

The establishment rained hell on working class people after the riot. Campaigners and non-payers faced police raids and arrest.

The Sunday People newspaper printed images of protesters with the headline "If you know 'em, SHOP 'EM".

Newspapers complained that

"bloody mob rule" had taken over London.

Labour leader Neil Kinnock denounced demonstrators as "toytown revolutionaries".

Labour's shadow home secretary Roy Hattersley urged cops to arrest rioters.

Even some socialists involved in the anti poll tax movement condemned protesters.

Yet this failed to quell the resistance.

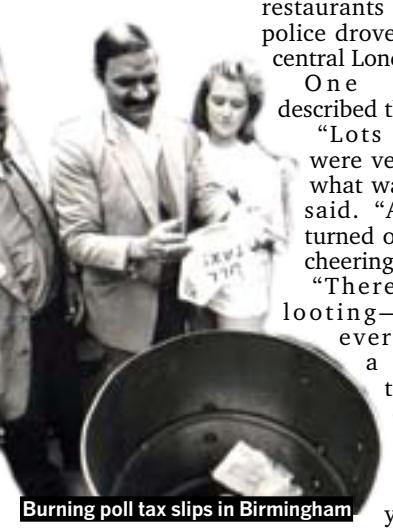
In the weeks after the riot some council workers struck and refused to collect the tax.

Protests continued to attract thousands in towns and cities across Britain.

By June a third of people in England and Wales hadn't paid the tax.

And when people were hauled through the courts to

Protesters were absolutely right to fight back against the police



Burning poll tax slips in Birmingham

A PROTEST in Hackney in east London

Riots—cry of rage against repression

OUR RULERS claim riots don't fit the "British" way of doing things.

But Britain's history is full of them.

And far from involving a minority bent on "mindless violence", many have high levels of organisation and enjoy widespread support.

Thousands of peasants terrified the establishment by joining the 1381 Peasants' Revolt.

It began after King Edward II imposed "poll taxes" that hit poor people the hardest.

Rebels targeted people closely connected to the courts and royals. They ransacked the homes of the rich and burnt tax records.

Police racism sparked riots during the 1980s, including in Bristol and Brixton and Tottenham in London.

The most recent riots followed the police killing of Mark Duggan in 2011 (see pages 108-11). Riots occur when ordinary people refuse to accept "their place". For our rulers, this is their real crime.

Socialists support

anyone who fights back against the system.

And riots have won important concessions.

To win more we need to challenge the system as a whole with mass working class resistance.

They drilled

military-style in fields in the dead of night. Armed Luddite units launched highly organised assaults on bosses' homes.

Our rulers proclaim horror at poor people's violence. But it's nothing compared to the state.

Protesters killed seven people in riots between 1736 and 1848. State forces killed 609 people putting down protests.

And riots are often a response to state repression. In 1866 a government ban on a Reform League meeting sparked three days of rioting.

Police racism sparked riots during the 1980s, including in Bristol and Brixton and Tottenham in London.

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They drilled

Corruption has fuelled a reactionary street movement. But there is also resistance from the left, reports Sean Purdy

RIGHT WING parties and movements in Brazil have been on a renewed offensive during the last few weeks.

This was marked by massive demonstrations in all the major cities against the Workers' Party (PT) government.

The one in Sao Paulo drew in 250,000 people. The demonstrations galvanised all conservative forces in the country, including political parties, business associations, the media, far right skinheads and groups linked to the military.

Significant numbers called for the impeachment of the president. They aped Cold War anti-communist slogans against social programs.

Some even called for military intervention.

For the first time since the coup in 1964, the right mobilised significant numbers onto the streets.

The protests were supposedly organised by grassroots groups. But it's clear that they are linked to the opposition political parties, the conservative media and corporations.

Oppose

The demonstrations were widely publicised beforehand by the huge media conglomerates who oppose the government.

President Dilma Rousseff's federal government is clearly in crisis and facing challenges from both the right and left.

It is embroiled in a huge corruption scandal in the state petroleum company, Petrobras.

Dozens of PT members, including elected officials—as well as politicians associated with all the parties—have been implicated in bribery and influence peddling.

Rousseff has not only reneged on her promises to maintain fledgling social spending. She has introduced a series of cuts to



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● Radical History of Britain

by Edward Vallance

● Voices from the poll tax struggle

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tinyurl.com/pkxm298

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EYEWITNESS BRAZIL

Strikes can challenge the return of the right wing

TEACHERS ON strike in Sao Paulo

BACK STORY

The ruling Workers' Party (PT) was re-elected in 2014

● The PT is backed by trade unions and much of the left

● But its attacks on workers' rights and living standards of the poor led to mass protests in 2013 and 2014

● Now the economy is faltering and the PT is mired in a corruption scandal at the state oil company

● The right wing opposition led huge demonstrations in every major city last month

social programs, especially education, and imposed restrictions on workers' pension rights.

Reeling from the effects of the global economic crisis and the Petrobras scandal, the PT government turned its back on the very social movements and unions who mobilised for its reelection.

And sacked construction workers on Petrobras works in Rio de Janeiro have mounted a popular campaign to win their jobs back.

The homeless workers' movement in the large cities continues to organise big demonstrations against the permanent housing shortage.

The anti-government left and social movements need to oppose the calls for the illegal impeachment of Rousseff.

And we need to resist the right's attempts to use "anti-corruption" as means to cut social programs and workers' rights. But we also need a united front of parties and social movements that oppose the government and the right.

Sean Purdy is a member of the Party of Socialism and Freedom in Sao Paulo, Brazil

Dilma Rouseff's government has turned its back on unions and movements

Bosses misled blacklisted workers

by SIMON BASKETTER

A COMMITTEE of MPs slammed a compensation scheme set up by building bosses as "misleading, callous and manipulative".

The House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee released a report on Friday of last week.

It said the Construction Workers Compensation Scheme launched by eight of the 30 companies that blacklisted workers was an "act of bad faith".

The eight companies are Balfour Beatty, Carillion, Costain, Kier, Laing O'Rourke, Sir Robert McAlpine, Skanska UK and Vinci PLC.

Mislead

Labour MP Ian Davidson, chair of the Committee, said "To mislead MPs is a serious issue but to mislead blacklisted workers and their families by implying that the trade unions were in agreement with the scheme is both callous and manipulative."

"Given the denial and duplicitous practices we have encountered on the part of many of the companies who were complicit in blacklisting, we have



Protesting in Glasgow against blacklisting in 2012

PICTURE: DUNCAN BROWN

no confidence in the sector."

He also made the call that those firms "who have refused to self-cleanse" should be "banned from all contracts funded, in whole or in part, by public money code of practice".

The committee has backed the call for a full public inquiry into blacklisting. This is something the Labour Party has said it supported last week.

Justin Bowden, GMB union

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BACKSTORY

The Information Commissioner seized a blacklist of over 3,200 construction workers in a raid in 2009

- The blacklist was run by Ian Kerr, head of shadowy private detective firm The Consulting Association
- Bosses could pay Kerr £2.20 a time to view private details about workers
- This included trade union activity and employment history
- But workers fought back, forming the Blacklist Support Group

national officer, said the report "reflects how sick to death the MPs and everyone else is of the construction companies and their arrogant, bully boy attitude.

"Strip away the weasel words and crocodile tears from the blacklisting companies and their highly paid entourage of spin doctors and lawyers and the simple truth is that MPs of all political parties involved in

the Inquiry into Blacklisting in Employment do not trust the companies."

Dave Smith, secretary of Blacklist Support Group added, "This damning report on the dying days of this parliament condemns the grandees of the construction industry for the blacklisting wretches they are."

Insult

"The mis-named compensation scheme set up unilaterally by the blacklisting firms is a complete insult to those who have lost their jobs, their homes and in some cases their lives.

"The evidence that senior officers from undercover secret police spying units colluded with the illegal blacklisting conspiracy is a stain on democracy.

"Blacklisting and the lust for profit has caused the deaths of building workers. The directors of the blacklisting companies and the senior police officers who orchestrated the spying on union activists have blood on their hands."

Blacklisted—the secret war between big business and union activists by Dave Smith and Phil Chamberlain. Available from bookmarksbookshop.co.uk or phone 020 7637 1848

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Barnet care workers strike back against Tory service cuts

A struggle by care workers in Barnet, north London to defend pay and a quality care service has got bosses on the ropes. It's bad news for the council privatisers, reports Raymie Kiernan

CARE WORKERS in Barnet, north London, are determined to win. They strongly rejected a desperate last minute offer from bosses to end the dispute last week.

Your Choice Barnet (YCB) bosses thought they could avert a planned strike with an offer. But workers voted with their feet and struck for three days from Wednesday of last week. Pressure is building on bosses since a scathing Care Quality Commission (CQC) report rated standards "inadequate" at the Tory-run council's care firm.

"Last year management said there was a £400,000 shortfall so they were going to cut our wages by 9.5 percent," said Unison union rep Keith.

"But last week they announced YCB made £100,000 profit in the past year. So they tried to offer £40,000 to share between us to get us to stop the strike. We said no."

Striker Rose said, "They think they can come and offer us £250 and we'll shut up—I don't think so."

Snubbed

Some managers seem to be taking it personally. After workers snubbed the offer bosses changed the lock on the gate to the grounds of the biggest day centre and took strikers' chairs for the picket line inside.

YCB bosses have also reduced the amount on offer to £30,000 according to Keith. He said, "It's like they see us as naughty children not eating our dinner."

What bosses don't understand is that it's not just about money. Workers want to ensure the adults with disabilities they care for are properly looked after.

But changes to the service since Barnet Council outsourced the



PICKETS AT Flower Lane Day centre in Barnet on Friday of last week

PICTURE: JULIE SHERRY

workers are making things worse.

The use of agency workers and the extra workload it can mean is a big issue for YCB workers. This failure to maintain a stable permanent core staff creates problems.

Leo explained, "As well as the people I care for I have to watch over the agency staff because they can't administer medicines or be left on their own. And each time there's someone new they have to be inducted.

The workers' anger extends beyond

"I can't give 100 percent to my job because of all these extra responsibilities. That puts more stress on me. And with the pay cut I'm forced to work an extra day a week to pay my bills—it's unsustainable."

Less

Rose told Socialist Worker, "They are just bringing people in on less money to do the same job."

Some workers' names have been changed

what the local Tories are doing.

Carl said, "They are telling us we are all in it together but we are not. Look at these rich people hiding their money in the tax havens while people are using food banks.

"This is a struggle for everyone. We are prepared to carry on fighting and keep up the pressure. And we'll strike again if we have to."

Let's bring it back in-house

THE neoliberal laboratory of Barnet council is failing. There is now a growing body of evidence to back the argument to bring services back in-house.

But the stakes are high and the flagship Tory council will only be defeated with a sustained and determined struggle. More strikes will be needed.

And solidarity will be crucial to help the YCB workers win.

The nightmare of outsourcing has pushed Barnet Unison to ballot all remaining council workers after the Tories voted through another raft of mass outsourcing.

The Tories' Barnet experiment is being

Staff cuts of 30 percent hurt the continuity of care

THE CARE Quality Commission (CQC) report is a damning indictment of Tory outsourcing in Barnet.

And it vindicates the arguments workers made before their service was farmed out in 2012.

Warnings from Barnet Unison at the time and since have largely been ignored as Tory councillors steamed ahead with their plans to outsource supported living services.

A restructure in 2013 and cuts to pay on shift allowances saw staffing levels cut by 30 percent.

An increased use of agency workers has impacted on the continuity of care provided.

YCB has refused to release figures on the use of agency workers. Striker Keith said that in the past two weeks half of the staff at his workplace were agency workers.

"Some are regularly used but many are not," he said.

It means inexperienced workers are being used for a service in which they don't fully understand what is required to provide the quality of care needed.

Keith explained, "Experienced staff can understand the needs of someone with profound learning disabilities just by noticing single eye gestures but they are being lost to the service.

"They are being replaced by poorly trained, ill-equipped workers."

The CQC criticised YCB because too many staff "did not have the skills or understanding to care for people who had different needs effectively".

It said safety was "compromised in a number of areas" ranging



Workers struck against the Tories' 'easyCouncil' outsourcing in 2012

from medical records not updated to people at risk of food poisoning from incorrectly stored or out of date food. It also raised concerns about "low numbers of staff".

The council's adults and safeguarding committee last month questioned a YCB manager on the CQC's repeated criticisms of staff training.

In reply, the manager claimed workers receive regular training. Strikers were furious. "I've been here six years but since we became YCB I've had no training," said Rose.

Privatisation has failed services

copied across Britain. Each savage cut to local public spending forces councils to look for ways to raise money. And the privateers wait with open arms as more services are outsourced to "make savings".

It must be resisted before local government as we know it has disappeared altogether.

Send messages of support to contactus@barnetunison.org.uk
Send strike fund donations to Barnet Unison Industrial Action Fund, Building 4, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP

IN BRIEF

**Palace staff say—
‘pay up or we strike’**

THE ROYAL family faces a strike by low paid workers in Windsor Castle as a ballot begins over allowances.

The PCS union said it would be the first walkout specific to the royal households. It comes after years of being paid below the living wage.

New recruits start on as little as £14,400 a year. The ballot closes on 14 April.

Fighting the Tories’ attacks on abortion

AROUND 50 activists joined the debate at an Abortion Rights public meeting and AGM last Saturday in London.

It came in the wake of a number of attempts to curtail women’s rights under the Tory government.

Dr Jayne Kavanagh talked about new pressures doctors face to question women about their reasons for wanting an abortion.

The meeting agreed to raise the profile of the greater hurdles women face to access abortions.

Debating aftermath of Charlie Hebdo

THE MUSLIM Institute held a conference in London last Saturday to debate the aftermath of the Charlie Hebdo attacks in January.

The one-day event was called to discuss “whether Muslim communities in Britain face a difficult future”.

Some argued more had to be done to tackle “extremism”. But most refused to blame Muslims for terrorism, and agreed that the main task is to fight Islamophobia and racism.

All out to oppose Pegida racists

UNITE AGAINST Fascism (UAF) has called a counter-protest against a planned demonstration by Islamophobic group Pegida in London this Saturday.

Despite recent flops for the racists people should not be complacent.

Joint secretary of UAF Weyman Bennett said, “UAF is asking all anti-racists and anti-fascists to attend our protest to ensure Pegida do not get a foothold in London.”

• Sat 4 April, assemble 4pm, opposite Downing St, Westminster, London SW1

Milk delivery strike plans go sour

A PLANNED three-day strike by milk delivery drivers in the north of England set for Wednesday of this week has been called off.

The strike was to involve members of both the Unite and GMB unions.

A GMB regional officer said that the union and bosses had reached “an amicable conclusion”.

EDUCATION



STUDENTS IN Lewisham join teachers and unions protesting last month

PICTURE: ANDREW SMITH

Prepare for resistance to education assault

by PAUL MCGARR

DELEGATES WILL gather in Harrogate this weekend for the annual conference of the National Union of Teachers (NUT).

Whichever party leads the new government we will see more austerity. The Tories plan deeper cuts and Labour says it will stick to them, including education cuts of 12 percent.

This will mean job losses, rising class sizes and workloads that will hit students hard.

More pay restraint will attack our living standards worse than anything we have seen since 2010.

Along with this assault goes the drive to hand over education to corporations—meaning more academies and free schools and possibly

for-profit schools.

Education as we know it will be wrecked as the curriculum is narrowed and schools are pushed to become exam factories.

Childline reported a 200 percent spike in exam stress related calls last year—this trend will continue under the policies of both main parties.

Organise

To reverse this assault resistance and strikes on more serious scale than the last few years will be needed.

We need to organise in schools and reach out to parents and others.

The NUT’s resistance got rid of former education secretary Michael Gove and his plans to rip up national working conditions.

But it has fallen short of what was needed to stem the attacks education has suffered.

One of the crucial debates delegates face is how to fight the tests for 4 year olds—and build a boycott of them.

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) will hold an important fringe meeting with two members of the NUT executive, Anne Lemon and Martin Powell Davies. They are standing as TUSC parliamentary candidates in the general election.

And there will also be debates on challenging the scapegoating, racism and Islamophobia whipped up by politicians and the media.

They want to divide resistance to austerity and we have to stop them.

ROUND-UP

UCU UNION members at Greenwich College in south east London struck on Friday of last week in a row over contracts.

Bosses want to impose new contracts that would increase the working week, cut holidays and introduce unannounced observations.

The strike was solid with a large picket line all day. Workers received solidarity from local NUT, GMB and

Unison union members. Two more strike days are planned in the first week back after the holidays.

• Send messages of support to lynne.windeatt@btinternet.com

■ EDUCATION workers and students met in London on Tuesday of last week to show solidarity with people in Greece.

The meeting was called by London Region UCU and the

Greece Solidarity Campaign. It called for Greece’s debt to be cancelled.

■ AROUND 200 protesters marched on Downing Street on Wednesday of last week in protest at cuts to adult education funding. The march was called by London Region UCU.

It has called a national demo against the cuts on Saturday 25 April.

OBITUARY

Maureen Delenian
1937-2015

Maureen Delenian

MAUREEN WAS involved in the women’s liberation movement in Portsmouth when she came across the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Finding our politics clear she joined the SWP there in the late 1970s.

She went on to help the branch through some very tough days in the early

1980s. She was a stalwart of the National Abortion Campaign and worked at the Marie Stopes clinic for years battling to maintain the service.

She was very reliable and active, always aware of demonstrations and doing her best to participate even when she was getting old and frail.

Maureen took an art degree in her 60s and became an accomplished practising artist. She created glass sculptures which were featured in

Academy supporter resigns

CAMPAIGNERS against academies in Lewisham, south east London, were buoyed by the news that Frankie Sulke, council director for children and young people, will resign her post in the summer.

The resignation follows several successful strikes at three Lewisham schools against becoming academies.

Students and parents have joined big picket lines.

Maggie Palmer from the Stop Academies in Lewisham

campaign told Socialist Worker, “I was leafleting with five school students in Lewisham last Saturday.

“They were really chuffed to hear that Frankie Sulke had resigned. She is one of the backers of forcing the schools to become academies. People feel that the campaign against that can go on to win.”

Sadie Robinson

● Go to **Stop Academies in Lewisham** on Facebook to get the latest on the campaign

UNIVERSITIES

Reinstate Damien and Jenny

by MARTIN McMULKIN

A PACKED meeting called at half a days notice on Friday of last week vowed to fight for the reinstatement of sacked trade unionists Damien and Jenny Markey.

University of Bolton UCU union branch secretary Damien was hauled before bosses at 30 minutes notice the week before and summarily dismissed.

Three days later his wife Jenny, a university admin worker and Unison union member, was also sacked.

University authorities are angry and embarrassed at several stories in the national press alleging a cavalier misuse of public money. This includes a loan of £960,000 to the vice chancellor to buy a large house seven times the

average local house price. Bosses sacked Damien and Jenny claiming, without any evidence, that Damien was the source of the stories but the journalists who broke them deny this.

UCU and Unison members were joined at the meeting by leading trade unionists. Plans were made to launch a campaign, including industrial action, to win Damien and Jenny’s reinstatement.

Bolton trades council chair Neil McAlister pledged to raise solidarity from local trade unions and called on UCU and Unison regional officials to call a national demo in defence of trade union rights in Bolton.

● Messages of support can be sent to Jenny and Damien via Bolton Trades Council at mmcmulkin@hotmail.com

LONDON METROPOLITAN

Campaign to stop job cuts

WORKERS AT London Metropolitan University in north London are considering strikes in response to bosses’ plan to cut 165 jobs.

UCU and Unison union members held meetings of staff and students at the university last week. They voted unanimously for proposals for strikes and a marking boycott.

A lobby of the management is planned for the week after the Easter break. Workers are also coordinating action with

City and Islington College, which faces major budget cuts to adult education courses.

London Met is a vital institution for working class students.

The planned cuts will increase the current staff to student ratio.

It will mean the university has some of the most overworked staff in the country.

Katherine Igidbashian, London Met student

several exhibitions.

A regular at Marxism she not only exhibited in the Left in Vision art exhibitions at the event between 2007-10, she was also a great help in organising them.

In her later years she lived in Poplar in east London.

After a stroke she still managed to write an important essay on public art and tried to get the owners of a block of flats to allow her to put up artistic creations on the entrance to the flats, but sadly without success.

She was notable for her brightly coloured hair, so we could always pick her out on demonstrations.

Always cheerful and helpful she made a great contribution to the struggle for socialism over nearly 40 years.

She will be sadly missed. Our condolences go to her sons Stuart, Steve and Peter. Steve Hammill, John Molyneux and Mary Philips

TRADE UNIONIST AND SOCIALIST COALITION

Support socialists in general election

by NICK CLARK

PARLIAMENTARY candidates for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) have hit the ground running as the official general election campaign gets under way.

Tottenham candidate Jenny Sutton has produced an election newspaper, and spent last weekend delivering them to local residents.

She told Socialist Worker, "We managed to cover about a third of the ward over the weekend, with 42 people helping out."

Jenny explained that her campaign was involving lots of new people in political activity.

"People we hadn't met before came to help out after seeing our leaflets," she said.

"A street cleaner came to help on both days. We met him on a protest outside Haringey council, and he put one of our posters on his barrow."

"Not one Labour councillor voted against £70 million worth of cuts that would mean a quarter of the Haringey workforce could be made redundant".

Glasgow North candidate Angela McCormick described a similar experience.



TUSC CANDIDATES and supporters protest against racism last month

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

She told Socialist Worker, "We're busy and loving it. But it's not easy—we've got to fight hard."

"People want to see real change and the promises of the referendum. They want to punish Labour from the left."

"What we're trying to do is offer an example. Everywhere we go we're getting support

and offers for help."

Over 100 people attended a hustings in Streatham, south London, involving TUSC candidate Unjum Mirza on Thursday of last week.

Streatham resident Pamela told Socialist Worker she was considering voting TUSC after the hustings.

She said, "I'm from an immigrant background and

working class. I would have traditionally voted Labour."

"But because of our Labour council, and our MP Chukka Umunna, I can't say I could bring myself to vote for them."

"People are getting fed up with the mainstream parties. I don't know who I'm voting for yet, but I'm thinking of voting for TUSC."

●tusc.org.uk

STUDENTS

Occupations spread to more London campuses

STUDENT occupations at the London School of Economics (LSE) and University of Arts London (UAL) have continued into the Easter break.

And students at two more London universities—Goldsmiths and King's College—have occupied too.

All four occupations are demanding the abolition of tuition fees and more student involvement in the running of the universities.

Occupiers at UAL's Central St Martin's Campus are also fighting cuts to foundation courses.

On Wednesday of last week students marched on UAL's London College of Communication campus in south London, where the

majority of the affected courses are taught.

But university management called in police to shut down the campus after students tried to occupy the main building.

UAL student Elliott told Socialist Worker, "When police and private security lock people out of the uni, they're the ones stopping LCC students working".

LSE management have threatened students with legal action unless they end the occupation. LSE students have launched a petition in response.

●Sign the LSE petition at chn.ge/1xP5Jgx. Send messages of support to UAL students to occupyual@gmail.com.

PALESTINE SOLIDARITY

Activists debate how best to win liberation in Palestine

SOME 70 people attended a public meeting on Palestine on Wednesday of last week, organised by Camden Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC).

Speakers included retiring local Labour MP Frank Dobson, Green Party leader and local candidate Natalie Bennett and local Labour candidate Keir Starmer.

Two Palestinian women—Haya Al Farra from the Palestinian Mission, and Salma Karmi-Ayyoub, a barrister—also spoke.

George Binette, Unison secretary of Camden Trades' Council, emphasised the significant contribution of the trade union movement to building solidarity with Palestine.

Author John Rose stressed the importance of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions

strategy. There was a lively discussion. People felt that the event played an important role in raising the profile of Palestine and the PSC.

●UP TO 100 people attended a Fair Play for Palestine campaign launch meeting in Cardiff, South Wales, last Saturday.

It coincided with the Israel versus Wales football match that took place in Palestine.

It was supported by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Stop the War, Friends of Al Aqsa and Red Card Israeli Racism.

The campaign plans a demonstration on 6 September when the Israeli team is set to play in the Cardiff City Stadium.

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE

Conference calls for radical action to save the planet

UP TO 1,000 mostly young people met in central London last Saturday to discuss radical social change in response to climate change.

The This Changes Everything conference was named after a recent book written by Naomi Klein.

She gave the keynote speech via video link and said stopping climate change "means changing everything about our profit driven economic system".

"Our leaders aren't going to do that—they are too embedded in that profit-driven logic," she said. "So social movements have to grab the wheel from them."

The conference came just three weeks after a 20,000-strong Time to Act demonstration in London.

Medical student James told Socialist Worker, "Bringing social movements together is really important. It's when people are on their own that they feel disempowered."

Marcher Kay said, "We need a political movement that can take on the big structures."

Klein called for "bold, radical demands". She said protests can turn the United Nations talks on climate change in Paris in December into "a megaphone for the movement".

Workshops discussed how to bring about the change needed to save the planet.

In the final session celebrity campaigners Russell Brand and Francesca Martinez spoke about how their experiences had led them to reject the system.

PCS union general secretary Mark Serwotka said trade unionists and environmentalists should challenge the lie that tackling climate change isn't in workers' interests.

The conference organisers called for a "day of dissent" against the TTIP trade deal on 18 April.

Dave Sewell

OFFSHORE OIL WORKERS

UNITE UNION members covered by the Offshore Contractors Agreement have voted by 93.5 percent to hold a ballot for industrial action. The GMB union said its members also voted overwhelmingly for a ballot.

The consultative ballot results came the day after oil giants Shell and Taqa announced they would be axing 350 North Sea jobs.

The RMT union urged its offshore members to opt back in to the Working Time Regulations' 48-hour limit on the working week.

It said this could minimise job losses.

Its executive has also endorsed a call from members to ballot for industrial action.

Strikes could still be some way off but the mood for action is stirring.

There is deep anger among workers that an estimated 10,000 jobs have been lost since the oil price slumped and bosses imposed changes to shift patterns.

The Tories recently handed bosses a £1.3 billion tax break. They are making billions in profits but workers are being made to pay for falling prices.

Raymie Kiernan

TRANSPORT WORKERS

Strikes to defend workers

RMT UNION members at Edinburgh Waverley working on board East Coast trains were set to strike on Friday of this week.

They are demanding the reinstatement of a sacked colleague.

The union said the dispute centres around how management is using the disciplinary procedure.

CONDUCTORS, drivers and train managers working in Penzance on First Great Western trains struck for 24 hours on Friday of last week.

The workers' RMT union called its members out following a 79 percent vote for strikes to defend a colleague the union said was "fitted up and victimised".

An overtime ban is now in place and a 48-hour strike was set to begin at 6am this Sunday.

■THE RMT rail union is set to begin a formal strike ballot of its 17,000 members at Network Rail.

Workers overwhelmingly rejected a pay offer by 93 percent in a ballot.

Bosses' final offer included an effective pay cut for the first year of the four-year deal. It gave no commitment on compulsory redundancies past the end of this year.

■SUPPORTERS OF the Hands Off London Transport campaign and the RMT union held a day of action on Friday of last week.

They called on Tory mayor Boris Johnson and Tube bosses to abandon plans to close ticket offices and slash jobs.

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition and Disabled People Against Cuts joined the actions.

DETAINES JOIN FREEDOM CALLS

by MARGARET WOODS

DETAINEES IN Dungavel Detention Centre in Lanarkshire took to its grounds last week to join a solidarity demonstration taking place outside.

Some 60 people were protesting against detention outside the refugee prison last Sunday when they heard chants coming from behind the wall.

Through holes in the fence they could see around 30 detained migrants in the yard waving, answering the slogans and chanting, "Freedom, freedom."

The protest was called by The Harmony Choir and Glasgow Campaign to Welcome Refugees.

They were joined by the Maryhill Integration Network and supporters of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition.

Power

Protesters received a thank you message from the detainees which said, "It was a full show of people power."

Usually when there is a demonstration outside detainees are confined to their rooms, and visitors or



PART OF the protest outside Dungavel detention centre in Lanarkshire last Sunday

PICTURES: JOSH BROWN

lawyers are not allowed into the centre.

Some people have been detained in Dungavel for more than a year.

Many detainees have been brought to the centre from England and have no family or friends nearby who can visit them.

Britain is the only country in Europe to keep refugees detained indefinitely. A limit of 28 days could soon be put in place.

This week a report was also published into Harmondsworth in London, Britain's largest immigration detention centre.

An investigation by the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) slammed it as "depressing" and "dirty".

The centre holds more than 600 men. The IMB found that it has "a destructive effect on the welfare of detainees".

It reported how one

migrant sewed his mouth shut in protest at the conditions and was unable to "eat, drink or medicate".

Only known as Mr U he wrote a note which said, "Release me or send me home."

He spent nearly nine months in detention and was

later released.

Hunger strikes have also been taking place at Harmondsworth.

The report said the government should "urgently" set up an independent review into the practice of keeping detainees locked up for more than a year.

Shutting

Glasgow Campaign to Welcome Refugees calls for the shutting of Dungavel and all other detention centres in Britain.

This call has been echoed by members of the Scottish government as well as trade unions.

But people who have been detained for long periods of time and are traumatised cannot just be thrown onto the streets without status.

They should be granted asylum and given proper health care and assistance to establish a normal life.

Some have been detained as long as five years.

They should also be compensated for the lengthy inhumane periods of imprisonment which they have suffered.

Margaret Woods works with the Glasgow Campaign to Welcome Refugees gctwr.co.uk

'We won't go back until we win,' say Glasgow workers on indefinite strike

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

Homelessness caseworkers in Glasgow walked out on indefinite strike on Tuesday of this week in a row over pay grading with city council bosses.

All 70 Unison union members formed solid picket lines at four sites across the city.

Some 90 strikers and supporters joined a lobby of the council.

The workers deal with vulnerable people coping with issues such as addiction, mental health problems and housing.

"We're the last safety net before someone ends up on the street," Unison union rep Stuart told Socialist Worker.

A council spokesperson

has claimed all that the workers do is "arrange accommodation" and "are graded at an appropriate level".

But as Stuart pointed

out, "Some people come to us with complex needs and stay with us because they don't qualify or fit criteria for other services.

"At any one time we're dealing with 3,000 homeless cases across the city. We carry the same responsibilities as other social care sectors."

Workers are a grade below those doing similar work on the social work pay scale. Some are paid up to £5,000 a year less.

Stuart said, "Colleagues are astonished we are on a lower grade to them. Management say we don't do a 'care management'

job, and are not capable of doing that because we are not on that grade—you couldn't make it up.

"Three quarters of us are women. This is a fight for wage equality."

Strikers have worked to rule for the last eight weeks and refused duties they aren't paid for.

Then they voted to go all out.

As one striker at the Barlanark site told Socialist Worker, "We're absolutely sick and tired and have tried everything to sort this out."

Workers know strikes can get results. In 2013

they struck unofficially, defying the anti-union laws for three days, and won the reinstatement of a sacked colleague.

The strain of excessive workloads, and cuts to funding and jobs, fuelled the walkout. That anger still rumbles away.

The strikers are determined to win and will need solidarity.

As Stuart put it, "We're not going back to work until they regrade us."

Rush messages of support and donations to Glasgow City UNISON, 84 Bell St, Glasgow, G1 1LQ Email enquiries@glasgowcityunison.co.uk



Glasgow workers on the first day of their indefinite strike